

**Abstract**

A device for operating a plurality of discharge lamps is to be fashioned cost-effectively. Consequently, two discharge lamps (71, 72) are operated with the aid of one ballast in whose load circuit the heating current for the individual incandescent filaments (711, 712, 721, 722) is transmitted via a heating transformer with three secondary windings ( $L_{hs1}$ ,  $L_{hs2}$ ,  $L_{hs3}$ ). The associated primary winding ( $L_{hp}$ ) is located in a coupling-out circuit (30) with the aid of which the required heating energy is coupled out via an inductor ( $L_{res}$ ). The heating current can be controlled by means of a temperature-sensitive thermistor (PTC).